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EMPLOYMENT SOURCING SYSTEM

1 TECHNICAL FIELD

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3 The present invention is directed, in general, to an automated system and
4 method for matching job seekers with employers having available positions,
5 based on the job seeker's qualifications and employer's job requirements. In
6 particular, the invention is directed to an World Wide Web (WWW)-based
7 system for creating a pool of job candidates, ascertaining and storing personal
8 information and job-related qualifications, and selectively matching only

1 those candidates possessing the specific qualifications and/or criteria set by
2 the employer.

3

4 REFERENCE TO GOVERNMENT FUNDING

5

6 Not Applicable.

7

8 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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10 For many years, employment agencies (sometimes called search firms) have
11 been attempting to match job candidates to specific job criteria as required by
12 employers. Most employment agencies receive payment only for those
13 positions which they fill with qualified employee candidates. Therefore, in a
14 highly competitive environment, speed in identifying and presenting
15 candidates and presenting to potential employers is very important. It is also
16 extremely important to be able to handle a large number of potential
17 candidates in various fields in order to be in the best position to fill
18 employers' job requirements as they open.

19

20 The most commonly known method of matching personnel to job

1 specification criteria requires a person trained in job placement skills to
2 manually review documents such as resumes and other qualifications related
3 documents while comparing such documents to criteria specified by the
4 potential employer. Such a manual system has several drawbacks. It is
5 obviously very slow in most cases since there is no fast way to sort
6 unqualified candidates from qualified candidates on a large-scale basis. In
7 addition, it can be very time-consuming and therefore quite costly. Further,
8 the amount of applicants may be limited if much of the information about the
9 candidates must be remembered by the search consultants themselves. The
10 amount of candidates may also be limited by the factors such as the
11 geographical location of the job placement center, interpersonal skills of the
12 interviewer, and failure to widely distribute notice of the available position or
13 failure to distribute notice to the appropriate group of individuals. Use of
14 such a system makes it difficult to identify and present a list of qualified
15 candidates together with resumes and other needed information to the
16 requestor in a short period of time.

17

18 Some automated systems for selecting personnel based on job criteria do
19 exist. The majority of these systems merely store information regarding the
20 qualifications of various candidates in a computer database as, for example,

1 in the form of resumes. The searcher then types in certain key words which
2 relate to the job qualification criteria hoping to match the key words with the
3 job criteria. Such systems are limited by the fact that the use of keywords is
4 very imprecise. This is due to the fact that job titles and, in particular,
5 technological slang terms or "buzz" words have meanings which vary quite
6 extensively from employer to employer and from one region to another.
7 Further, such systems are not "user friendly" because they often require
8 significant training and experience with the system before it can be used
9 effectively. Such systems are further limited by misspellings which can
10 commonly occur in large databases and which may cause candidates to be
11 missed by a key word approach. Furthermore, these systems lack automated
12 methods for immediately determining whether each candidate applying for a
13 position meets the criterion for that particular position, while the application
14 process is still being completed.

15

16 High speed, a low cost to hire, and quality candidates are the keys to any
17 successful recruitment program in today's rapid-fire employment market.

18 Downloading resumes from a database saves time but there remains a need
19 for a resume screening process that utilizes an understanding of the available
20 position, the respective business and employer's needs to select suitable

1 candidates for employment.

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3 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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5 In many ways the present invention performs much of the traditional
6 functions of an employment agency. For instance, job-seeking candidates
7 can submit resumes and various job preferences, or express interest in a
8 particular position available, and the employer "clients" are saved the time
9 and expense it would cost to find qualified applicants themselves.

10 Recruiting, like most tasks, is vastly improved by computer automation and
11 the Internet. The present invention makes use of both to offer advantages
12 and improvements over previous systems by, among other things, providing
13 a logically-reasoned though fully-automated and user-friendly method for
14 determining in real-time whether a candidate suits a particular job based on
15 the candidate's qualifications and client specifications.

16

17 The present invention incorporates client-established requirements to screen
18 candidates with the particular job-related criteria supplied by potential
19 employers. Using the client's own criteria to screen candidates yields
20 intelligently chosen candidates who are best suited for the available position,

1 which is comparable to that of an experienced human recruiter. However,
2 the present invention is much more versatile and cost-effective because
3 clients from diverse industries can supply and tailor their criterion to suit
4 their own particular needs, which may include details related to highly
5 specialized areas. The screening criteria may include tests which evaluate the
6 candidate's technical proficiency, work-related skills, fit with company
7 culture, or any other area which the client deems pertinent to the position.
8 The candidate's results may thereafter be reviewed by the client. Preferably,
9 any questions posed to the candidate are answered by picking from multiple
10 choice, yes or no, or otherwise easily gradable.

11

12 The inventive system is preferably operated at a WWW-site ("web site")
13 which may be accessed by employment-seeking candidates through links
14 from other web sites, client web sites or Internet search engines.

15

16 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

17 The advantages, and the system and apparatus of the present invention will
18 be understood from the following description taken together with the
19 drawings, in which:

20

1 Figure 1 is a schematic diagram of a system for implementing the
2 method of the present invention;

3 Figure 2 is a schematic diagram of the method for implementing
4 another aspect of the present invention;

5 Figure 3 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the administration
6 system feature of the present invention;

7 Figure 4 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the "modify positions"
8 aspect of the administration system;

9 Figure 5 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the "find a job seeker"
10 aspect of the administration system;

11 Figure 6 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the "request a report"
12 aspect of the administration system;

13 Figure 7 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the "gatekeeper" aspect
14 of the administration system;

15 Figure 8 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the "hotline
16 administration" aspect of the administration system; and,

17 Figure 9 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the "hired protection
18 system" feature of the present invention;

19

20 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

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1 Figures 1 through 9 illustrate one embodiment of the present invention.

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3 In Figure 1, a candidate enters the web site of the operator of system 10 from
4 a client's homepage, as illustrated by step 12. Each new transfer from a client
5 homepage at step 12 to system 10 accrues client-identifying "tokens" at step
6 14. These tokens are tallied to determine the sum each client is charges for
7 use of system 10. A home page is presented to the candidate at step 3,
8 comprising a main menu with three selectable options. Preferably, each
9 option is represented by a three-dimensional button which may be "pushed"
10 by placing the mouse pointer on it and clicking the left mouse button. At step
11 16, the candidate may search for jobs by job category, update his or her
12 resume or search for jobs by location.

13

14 If the candidate chooses to search for jobs by job category, a new menu is
15 presented to the candidate comprising the available jobs listed by category as
16 established by the client from whose homepage the candidate entered system
17 10. Preferably, each new menu is a "pop-up" type menu. Step 18 illustrates,
18 as an example, a menu showing available positions as a programmer and
19 sales representative. Selecting either job category would provide new menus,
20 as illustrated in steps 20, 22, 24 and 26, listing further information regarding

1 the available positions and providing the candidate with the opportunity to
2 apply for a position.

3

4 If the candidate selects to search by location, a similar path comprising
5 menus, which are generated according to the candidate's geographical
6 preference and show the available jobs at the available geographical
7 locations, is illustrated in steps 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40.

8

9 The remaining selectable option in the main menu of step 16 provides the
10 opportunity for the candidate to update his or her resume. Candidates
11 choosing to update their resume have entered system 10 previously,
12 presumably submitted a resume, and are immediately directed to the
13 registration manager in step 42. As illustrated in figure 1, candidates
14 choosing to apply for an available position are also eventually directed to the
15 registration manager in step 42.

16

17 The registration manager in step 42 comprises a form requesting information
18 about the candidate that must be completed by the candidate in order to
19 make use of system 10. Each candidate is provided with a unique Universal
20 Identification Number (UIN), and may choose a password. Preferably, the

1 candidate must correctly enter their password only when returning to step 42
2 of system 10, or when returning to password-required areas of system 10
3 from non-password-required areas of system 10 or another website.

4

5 After the candidate submits the filled out registration form in step 42, a
6 search for the candidate's resume in client's database 44 is performed in step
7 46. If it exists, the resume template, with information as previously
8 submitted by the candidate, is displayed on the screen in step 48 and it can be
9 updated by the candidate. If a resume does not already exist, the candidate is
10 presented with client's job specific questions in step 50. Preferably, these
11 questions may be multiple choice, answered by a "yes" or "no", or otherwise
12 capable of being evaluated and scored immediately in step 52. If the
13 candidate meets the criteria, the candidate will be directed to submit further
14 information in step 48. If the candidate does not meet the criteria, then the
15 candidate will be directed to the main menu of step 16, as illustrated in step
16 54, where the candidate may select a different position or quit the search.

17

18 **?DOES A CANDIDATE WITH A RESUME ALREADY IN THE SYSTEM**
19 **(step 46) GO THROUGH STEP 50, i.e., COMPANY SPECIFIC**
20 **QUESTIONS, OR DOES THE SYSTEM COMPARE THE TEMPLATE**

1 **WITH COMPANY SPECIFIC DATA?**

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3 Newly submitted or updated information in step 48 is directed to the client's
4 resume database 44 and a copy is similarly stored in database 56 of system 10.

5 Preferably, resume template in step 48 gathers other information about the
6 candidate, including the candidate's job preferences.

7

8 Another aspect of the invention is illustrated in Figure 2. Here, a candidate
9 enters the website of the operator of system 10 via a referral source, such as
10 an internet search engine. A job seeking candidate is directed from the
11 referral homepage in step 58 to system 10, thus generating a "token"
12 identifying the referral source in step 60. After entering system 10, a screen
13 listing available job opportunities is provided to the candidate in step 62.

14

15 After selecting a job, the candidate is directed to the registration manager
16 screen in step 64, which is analogous to step 42 in Figure 1. As illustrated in
17 steps 66-70, a previously registered candidate may update his or her resume
18 or further pursue a job search offered the option of updating his or her
19 resume if the candidate is already registered, and if the candidate is not
20 registered, the candidate will be asked to fill out the resume template. The

1 completed resume template is kept in the system database 72. If there is an
2 available position that the candidate may be qualified for, based on
3 information provided in the resume template screen, such as skills,
4 experience, job preferences, etc., the candidate will be notified in step 74,
5 preferably by email. In step 70, the candidate may eliminate particular
6 employers from consideration or choose to restrict certain information from
7 being forwarded to certain clients, such as personal identifiers.
8
9 After the resume template in step 70 is completed, the candidate is directed to
10 the menu in step 76. The menu comprises options for searching available
11 positions by job category and by location, as in step 16. Also, steps 78
12 through 104 illustrate the screens for selecting a company and position and
13 applying for an available position, as in the aspect of the invention illustrated
14 in Figure 1. Step 76 illustrates a further option allowing the candidate to
15 access a specific available position by entering a reference code, such as an
16 alphanumeric identifier. Each available position is given a corresponding
17 unique reference code. Entering a reference code in step 76 directs the
18 candidate to that job description in step 106, and then on to the client-specific
19 questions in step 108. If the candidate is not qualified, step 112 directs the
20 candidate to the menu illustrated in step 76. If the candidate successfully

1 completes the client-specific questions, the candidates resume, that is
2 information inputted in step 70, is transferred from the system database
3 illustrated by step 72, to the client resume database in step 114. Step 116
4 provides the opportunity for the client to review resumes before being added
5 to including them in client search function in Administration System??? In
6 this embodiment, step 118 illustrates the process of checking the referral
7 token and paying the referral source only if the candidate is qualified.

8

9 Figures 3 - 6 illustrate one embodiment of a method for accessing the
10 inventive device to perform administrative and executive functions. Entry to
11 this part is restricted to maintain the confidentiality and security of the
12 system, as shown by the password entry box in step 130. The administrator
13 may be granted access to all or certain functions and areas within the
14 inventive system. For example, a designation, such as enterprise,
15 corporation, multi-business unit corporation, etc., may be used to indicate the
16 level of security accessible. Step 136 illustrates five selectable options in this
17 embodiment which are described below.

18

19 The "modify positions" option is expanded in Figure 4, and as illustrated by
20 steps 138 - 152, allows the administrator to learn about, search for, access and

1 alter job positions listed in the system.

2

3 The "find a job seeker" option is expanded in Figure 5, and as illustrated by
4 steps 154 - 166, all the administrator to search the system database for
5 candidate information by identification number, name or position. Once
6 located, the candidate's resume may be viewed, printed or sent via e-mail.

7

8 The "request a report" option is expanded in Figure 6 as illustrated by steps
9 168 - 176. The administrator may view and select from pre-designed reports
10 comprising various system performance data or order a custom made report
11 comprising the particular categories desired.

12

13 The "gatekeeper" option is expanded in Figure 7. There are three main
14 accessible areas illustrated in this embodiment of the invention. The
15 "resume" area in step 182 provides further administrative options to modify,
16 add, delete resumes. Also shown in steps 184 - 204, resumes may be
17 manually scored, approved, rejected, locked or marked as hired. The
18 "security" area, as illustrated by steps 206 - 208, comprises menus for setting,
19 adjusting and controlling the level of all users clearance in the system. The
20 "utility" area, illustrated by steps 210 - 222, provides a means for sending

1 email broadcasts, generating reports and creating press releases.

2

3 The "hotline administration" option is expanded in Figure 8. As illustrated in
4 steps 232 - 272, the options in this menu comprise mechanisms for setting
5 functions and adjusting system parameters such as sending automatic
6 messages, changing system settings, scheduling interviews, etc. Also, access
7 to the resume database, system homepage and system training is provided.

8

9 Figure 9 illustrates the hired protection system which ensures that the referral
10 source for a hired candidate is compensated and prevents the candidate's
11 resume from being further accessed.

12

13 The foregoing has outlined, rather broadly, preferred and alternative features
14 of the present invention so that those skilled in the art may better understand
15 the detailed description of the invention that follows. Additional features of
16 the invention will be described hereinafter that form the subject of the claims
17 of the invention. Those skilled in the art should appreciate that they can
18 readily use the disclosed conception and specific embodiment as a basis for
19 designing or modifying other structures for carrying out the same purposes
20 of the present invention. Those skilled in the art should also realize that such

- 1 equivalent constructions do not depart from the spirit and scope of the
- 2 invention in its broadest form.